

Report of the Director of City Development

Report to Executive Board

Date: 25 June 2014

Subject: Meanwood - Road Safety Campaign

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Moortown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. This report addresses the deputation received at the 26 March 2014 meeting of the Council from a group of concerned parents at St Urban's Primary school regarding road safety issues for the children, parents, carers and staff at a cluster of schools on Tongue Lane, including St Urban's School, Cardinal Heenan High School, Pennyfields School and Milestones Nursery.
2. The group has launched a campaign in support of a 20mph speed limit in the wider area around the schools and a review of the current pedestrian crossing and road safety measures on Tongue Lane and beyond.
3. Specific issues raised by the Deputation were:
 - 3.1. The positioning of a Zebra crossing outside the Cardinal Heenan school
 - 3.2. Dangerous driving witnessed on Tongue Lane, including failing to stop at a Zebra crossing and speeding
 - 3.3. Need for safety measures on a mini roundabout at the junction of Parkside Road and Church Lane.
4. The Best City ambition is to improve life for the people of Leeds and make our city a better place. Provision of safe crossing facilities, twenty miles-per-hour schemes and traffic calming where appropriate contribute to this ambition by improving the safety and quality of life of Leeds residents by enabling safe pedestrian journeys, and the

reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured is a measure of one of the objectives in the Best City Plan.

5. Leeds City Council has worked with the local schools, ward members and communities for a number of years to successfully improve the road safety record on Tongue Lane. Following the deputation, the measures implemented previously have been reviewed and meetings were held with Cardinal Heenan school and St Urban's primary school to better understand school travel patterns and the current use of the existing crossings. These resulted in a number of actions identified elsewhere in the report which can help build on the success of the road safety measures already in place.

Recommendations

6. The Executive Board is requested to:
 - 6.1. note the contents of the report, and the success of the measures already implemented on Tongue Lane to substantially improve its casualty record in the context of the overall road safety record for Leeds;
 - 6.2. note the recent review of the site and discussions with schools undertaken following the deputation;.
 - 6.3. note the constraints of the site in relation to safe provision of formal crossing facilities;
 - 6.4. endorse the development of further proposals in the current financial year to assist road safety and to aid pedestrian movements at the mini roundabout at the junction of Church Lane and Parkside Road; and
 - 6.5. note that the Chief Officer Highways & Transportation will be responsible for implementation.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report responds to the Deputation received at the 26 March 2014 meeting of the Council from the a group of parents at St Urban's Primary school regarding road safety issues around journey to schools and nursery located on Tongue Lane
- 1.2 The deputation asked for a review of the current pedestrian crossings, lower speed limit and other road safety measures on Tongue Lane, and for provision of road safety measures on the junction of Church Lane and Parkside Road. They are also campaigning for the introduction of a wider 20 mph speed limit around the schools.

2 Background information

Road Safety Context

- 2.1 Overall, road injuries lie on a continuing downward trend which has been the pattern for several decades. In 2005, there were 352 people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on Leeds roads, this number reduced in the following years to 290 in 2013. Presently the number of fatal and serious road injuries is at their lowest ever recorded level – this includes pedestrians and children (reduced from 114 per year in the worst years, to 78 KSIs in 2013), in contrast to the national trend where casualties among this type of road user have increased. As we aim for continuous improvement, a particular focus will remain on vulnerable road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motor cyclists, children and young people. The use of lower speed limits and provision of pedestrian crossing facilities have key role in this within local communities.
- 2.2 It is recognised that for many children the journey to school, particularly using active travel modes such as walking and cycling, can be seen as hazardous, especially if it involves crossing busy roads. Traffic outside schools tends to increase at the start and end of the school day; this is particularly the case for schools located on roads classed as 'local distributors'.
- 2.3 Leeds City Council has, for a number of years, worked directly with schools to improve the journey to and from school. This has involved: assistance with the preparation of school travel plans to encourage sustainable travel to school, direct involvement in initiatives promoting active travel and cycle, scooter and road safety training delivered to children at key stages of their education. Road safety and other measures, identified on the highway through school travel plans and through safety audits, are agreed and implemented.

History of the site

- 2.4 Over the last 10 years Leeds City Council has recognised the road safety concerns of the parents of children attending St Urban's and Cardinal Heenan, and of local ward members, and has worked with the schools to improve the casualty record of this section of Tongue Lane. Specific measures involved the installation of three speed humps to reduce vehicle speeds and provide informal

crossing opportunities - two of the speed humps were later converted to humped Zebra crossings. Additional footway linkages were also provided between bus stops to the humped crossing points, and a length of safety barrier was installed to maximise the use of the crossings.

- 2.5 These measures have resulted in a dramatic improvement in the casualty statistics on this length of road. In a five year period preceding the installation of speed humps (1999-2003), there were seven recorded injury accidents, including a severe injury accident involving a child pedestrian. The installation of speed humps more than halved the casualty rate - to only three slight injury accidents in the subsequent five years (one involving a child pedestrian who ran out in front of a vehicle), and eliminated severe injury accidents altogether. Since the installation of the Zebra crossing in 2009, there has only been one recorded slight injury accident along this length of Tongue Lane. The recorded speeds of traffic have reduced from around 33mph to 24mph, which had a direct impact on the number and severity of casualties. The above record indicates the success of the intervention measures in reducing actual vehicle speeds and in achieving a very significant reduction of the number and severity of accidents along this route.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The deputation raised the following issues;

Positioning of the Zebra Crossing

- 3.2 The Deputation raised the issue of the positioning of the humped Zebra crossings on Tongue Lane, located outside the Cardinal Heenan school near the junction with Woodlea Approach. The Zebra is used mainly by parents and children attending St Urban's Primary School exiting the Woodlea Estate through Woodlea Approach, as most of the pupils attending Cardinal Heenan school arrive on a school bus within the school grounds. Its position in relation to the junction is designed to give drivers sufficient stopping distance to aid compliance.
- 3.3 The location serves less well the bus stops on Tongue Lane and the dedicated pedestrian gates; the children who exit the bus walk to a pedestrian gate of Cardinal Heenan directly in front of the bus, crossing in an unsafe manner, as described by the Deputation.
- 3.4 However, as the vast majority of pupils at Cardinal Heenan arrive by school bus, these constitute a minority of pedestrians at this location and, in order to keep the sight lines clear, the crossing needs to be positioned some distance away from any bus stops to avoid masking the pedestrian waiting to cross, or already on the crossing, from approaching traffic. It is therefore unlikely that the relocation or creating an additional crossing would help improve the safety of the children crossing between the bus stop and the pedestrian entrance.
- 3.5 Because of the lack of a centrally positioned pedestrian entrance, those students who use the Zebra crossing tend to enter and leave the school through the vehicular exit, mixing with the traffic. As both schools allow parents to pick up and drop off children in the school car parks, the number of vehicles can, at times, be significant. Various initiatives that encourage sustainable travel to school and help

reduce traffic outside the school and within the school car parks, such as Walkshire, Go Green, Walk to School week, form part of school travel plans jointly developed with both schools, and were encouraged in the meetings held as the result of the deputation.

- 3.6 This issue was identified in the school travel plan in 2009, with an objective to provide a separate pedestrian entrance adjacent to the vehicular exit. Two options have been subsequently identified, but have not been pursued – the school is PFI funded and the installation of any additional facilities incurs significant maintenance costs.

Potential for additional crossings

- 3.7 The Deputation also called for consideration of road safety measures at the junction of Church Lane and Parkside Road. A recent survey of pedestrian and vehicular movements at the mini roundabout at this junction has not demonstrated a need for a formal crossing facility and the site does not have a significant accident record to support such a need. However, on-site observation in the busiest periods has shown some crossing difficulty at the arms of the roundabout and, with more vulnerable pedestrians less able to judge the speed and direction of traffic, the community severance issue may justify the provision of an informal facility such as pedestrian refuges to help overcome this difficulty.

Request for a 20mph limit

- 3.8 In terms of a wider 20mph speed limit in the area around the schools referred to by the Deputation, the Woodlea estate, which is within the catchment area for St Urban's Primary, has been identified as a potential 20mph scheme to be delivered in a future implementation programme. The extents of a potential 20mph scheme will be reviewed to take account of the successfully reduced vehicular speeds along the schools' frontage.
- 3.9 The current criteria for the locations to be brought forward in the delivery programme include vehicular speeds and accident statistics. Because of a good accident record in comparison with other sites, this site has so far not been prioritised for implementation. However, the approach to the delivery of 20mph schemes expected to be reviewed by the Scrutiny Board later in the municipal year.

Proposed actions

- 3.10 As the result of the deputation a review of the existing road safety measures has been undertaken, taking in to account the recent history of the site, and meetings were held with staff at Cardinal Heenan school and St Urban's primary school (Pennyfield School is a SILC school and pupils do not travel independently). To maximise the success of the initiatives already implemented outside the school complex on Tongue Lane in terms of improving pupils' safety, the following actions have been identified, to be pursued by the Highways and Transportation service and its partners

- Specific Road Safety education to raise awareness of safety issues with pupils that travel on service bus 51 before the end of summer term, and a full school Road Safety Assembly to be delivered in September 2014 to the pupils at Cardinal Heenan and St Urban's Primary;
- Highways and Transportation Road Safety team in conjunction with the West Yorkshire Police to look at delivering a mini police initiative in the parent drop off area;
- Cardinal Heenan School to request further support from Safer Schools Police Officers already working with the school in respect of any issues with non-compliance at existing Zebra crossings;
- Cardinal Heenan school leadership team to discuss the possibility of closing the pedestrian entrance opposite bus stop (in the morning only) to encourage the use of the zebra crossing;
- Highways and Transportation service to review signs and road markings near the schools and refurbish as necessary;
- Highways and Transportation service to review the extents of any future proposed 20 mph scheme outside the Tongue Lane school complex to include a section of Tongue Lane bordering the schools, and the need to extend traffic calming to facilitate this;
- Highways and Transportation service to assess the feasibility of the provision of informal crossing facilities at the two arms of a mini-roundabout at the junction of Church Lane and Parkside Road, to improve facilities for pedestrians.

3.11 The above actions are to be developed within the current financial year by the Head of Transport Planning.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 The Highways and Transportation service has worked directly with the schools, ward members and communities for a number of years to alleviate road safety concerns on Tongue Lane and has involved the school community in developing the actions proposed above. Ward members will be consulted on specific schemes as they develop.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.3 The review of the sites and the existing road safety measures, as well as the proposed actions, have been screened for their impact on the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. The screening, attached as an appendix, has identified specific impacts on children, young people, parents, carers, older people and disabled people in terms of the provision of road safety measures, crossing

facilities and 20 mph speed limits. These impacts are mainly positive - improving permeability of the local environment by reducing vehicular speeds and assisting more vulnerable pedestrians in crossing the road at specific points of high demand and conflict. The real reduction in the number and severity of recorded accidents involving children is one of the key benefits.

- 4.4 The suggested actions will help the above equality groups by improving the use of existing formal crossing facilities and, if feasible, by providing additional informal crossing measures. More importantly, they will help raise awareness of the road safety issues and equip children with skills that they can use anywhere on the highway, as well as continuing to assist schools in promoting active travel as part of an active lifestyle, with its potential life-long benefits for children and young people.

4.5 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.5.1 The success of the road safety measures delivered in the past and the set of proposals identified above show how we continue to address the Best City ambition to improve life for the people of Leeds and make our city a better place. Provision of safe crossing facilities, twenty miles-per-hour schemes and traffic calming where appropriate contribute to this ambition by improving the safety and quality of life of Leeds residents by enabling safe pedestrian journeys in local communities, overcoming severance from facilities by fast flowing traffic and reducing traffic collisions to make a specific contribution to the Best City for Communities and Child Friendly Leeds ambitions. Reducing the number of casualties involving loss of life or severe injury (Killed or Seriously Injured – KSIs) is one of the measures for the delivery of the objectives for the Best Council Plan.

- 4.5.2 This approach also complements the objectives of the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan - “To enhance the quality of life of people living in, working in and visiting West Yorkshire”; where the above road safety measures will continue to support sustainable and independent travel to school.

4.6 Resources and value for money

- 4.6.1 Whilst this report has no specific implication for resources, at the present time, the overall approach to casualty reductions is being reviewed as part of the next three year WYLTP implementation plan, which will reflect both the importance of road safety and the role of 20 mph schemes in its allocation of resources for 2014-17.
- 4.6.2 Detailed development of the improvements identified above will be delivered from Highways and Transportation resources, and ultimately will need to be secured through a bid as part of programmes for improving road safety contained in the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (WYLTP).

4.7 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.7.1 There are no legal implications. The report is eligible for Call-In.

4.8 Risk Management

- 4.8.1 As mentioned earlier, previously introduced measures have successfully reduced risk of road traffic collisions and casualties. The site review and discussions with the schools have identified further measures to support the existing road safety features, as identified in section 3.10. Further proposals for the provision of additional infrastructure to assist pedestrians will be subject to a Road Safety audit.
- 4.8.2 Additional road safety training, targeting specifically the pupils arriving at school by service bus, will provide greater awareness of risk in crossing the road in front of a stationary vehicle.
- 4.8.3 Should a Zebra crossing be relocated, or an additional crossing provided, where children currently crossing are masked by the waiting bus, this could lead to an increased risk of collisions due to poor sight lines.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The road safety measures delivered to date on Tongue Lane have resulted in lower speeds and have dramatically improved the safety record around the cluster of schools and nursery.
- 5.2 The site study has identified the potential for further measures to improve the use of the existing crossings and additional informal facilities at the mini roundabout to assist pedestrians crossing at the junction of Church lane and Parkside Road. A 20mph scheme around the schools has been identified and will be included in future programmes.
- 5.3 The Highways and Transportation service will continue to work with the schools on the development of initiatives to assist sustainable travel to school and will target its road safety programmes to ensure better practice at crossing.

6 Recommendations

The Executive Board is requested to:

- 6.1 note the contents of the report, and the success of the measures already implemented on Tongue Lane to substantially improve its casualty record in the context of the overall road safety record for Leeds;
- 6.2 note the recent review of the site and discussions with schools undertaken following the deputation;.
- 6.3 note the constraints of the site in relation to safe provision of formal crossing facilities;
- 6.4 endorse the development of further proposals in the current financial year to assist road safety and to aid pedestrian movements at the mini roundabout at the junction of Church Lane and Parkside Road; and

6.5 note that the Chief Officer Highways & Transportation will be responsible for implementation.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.